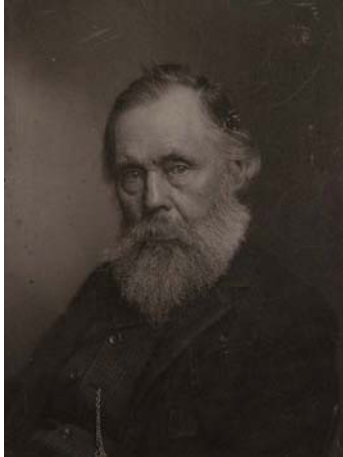

William T. Mathews (1821-1905)



William T. Mathews, c. 1890
Photograph
Taken by Vignos, Canton, Ohio
Collection of the Massillon Museum

William T. Mathews was born in Bristol, England. The Mathews family emigrated to Navarre, Ohio in 1833. His father, Joseph Mathews, supported his family of seven children as a printer and sign painter. William, with a desire to travel and explore his artist potential, moved to Cincinnati at the age of 24. He apprenticed under the portrait painter Charles Soule.

From Cincinnati, Mathews moved to a studio space on Broadway in New York City. It was here he studied under established artist Charles Loring Elliott, and continued his pursuit of art by enrolling in courses at the National Academy of Design and the College of Surgeons, where he studied anatomy. While in the city, he established a reputation of an accomplished artist, exhibiting for 25 years at the National Academy of Design and opening his art studio to visitors.

He received some of his greatest commissions while living in New York City, among them full-length portraits of Charles Sumner and Abraham Lincoln. Toward the end of his career, in the 1890s, Mathews occupied studio space in Washington D.C.'s Corcoran building. He would attend speeches given by Ohio Congressman, William McKinley, visit with him in Washington, and would even be invited to his home in Canton, Ohio on several occasions. It was from these encounters that Mathews grew to know and respect the future President. He offered to paint his portrait and did so twice. He also executed portraits of President James Garfield and Rutheford B. Hays.

William T. Mathews Gallery



*Mrs. J. Vaughan Merrick (née Annie
Brown Harter), 1893*

Oil

Collection of the Massillon Museum
Gift of Mary H. Merrick



Priscilla Mathews Gibbs, nd

Oil

Collection of the Massillon Museum
Gift of Isadore Mathews



Self-Portrait, 1890

Oil

Collection of the Massillon Museum
Gift of Isadore Mathews and Priscilla
Mathews Gibbs



Mr. J. P. Burton, nd

Oil

Collection of the Massillon Museum
Gift of the Burton-McLain Estate



Alfred Mathews, c. 1854
Oil
Collection of the Massillon Museum
Gift of Isadore Mathews



Mrs. John Hamilton, c. 1845
Oil
Collection of the Massillon Museum
Gift of Emma Hemperly



Roses, c. 1877
Oil
Collection of the Massillon Museum
Gift of James H. Rose

William T. Mathews and Portraiture

Teacher Guide

Grades: 9-12

GOALS:

- to make students aware of the purposes of portraiture.
- to help students understand the impact of style, light and mood in creating art.
- to make students aware of the impact of art technology on the impact of visual art.

PREPARATION:

To achieve the goals of this guide, teachers need to choose examples of portraits that are from various time periods, styles and media. Examples from the collection of the Massillon Museum include paintings from mid-19th century artist Wm. T. Mathews, 20th Century regionalist Clyde Singer and Early Renaissance artist Sano Di Pietro. Also available are photographs by Abel Fletcher and Belle Johnson.

A discussion about the impact of the invention of the photographic process on the development of artistic styles would be of value in preparing students for this project.

The students should be introduced to the works of art and given a brief explanation of the history of each piece and the medium used to complete it.

This project and discussion would be of value in preparation for a series of creative projects in learning how to do portraiture.

PROJECT:

Students should compare several portraits and discuss either in written form or in classroom discussion the differences between them. Items to be discussed should include color, realism, lighting, mood and the different effects created by the different media used.

A good approach might be asking the students if they like or dislike a particular piece and why.

Another approach might be to ask what the particular artist was trying to achieve in the work. This would lead to a discussion about the purpose of portraiture and the changes in the style and purpose of portraiture over history.

An explanation about miniature portraiture, its popularity in the 18th and early 19th centuries, and the artists who created them may be of interest at this point. A comparison of miniature portrait artists to school photographers might be of interest as well.

At some point the discussion should include what subject matter can be called portraiture.

Another approach to this subject would be to have students describe the hair and clothing styles in several of the works and to what value and purpose such observations might have. A discussion on how the styles that are currently popular will be viewed in the future could give students a different viewpoint.

Asking the students why people didn't smile in early photography leads to an interesting discussion.

OHIO STANDARDS:

This teacher guide addresses benchmarks and indicators primarily for the 9-12 level. Specifically addressed are benchmark C under Historical, Cultural and Social Contacts and benchmark A, Valuing the Arts/ Aesthetic Reflection